

CANONS

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Controversial Writing

Extracted from a late

CONTROVERSY

BETWEEN A

REVEREND DIVINE
of the Church of *England*,

AND A

DISSENTING GENTLEMAN.

*— quibus indiciis, quo teste probavit?
Nil horum: Verbosa & grandis Epistola venit.*

L O N D O N :

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C A N O N S

O F

Controversial Writing, &c.

I HAVE often wondered within myself, that, as the Art of Rhetoric, the Art of Poetry, the Art of Criticism, and even that of Cookery have been much cultivated, and complete Treatises have been compiled, both by the Ancients and Moderns, concerning each of them, no one has yet set forth, so far as my little Reading has informed me, a just Treatise concerning the Art of Controversial Writing. Until, therefore, some one shall arise, and give us a perfect System of that Art, the following Precepts, it is hoped, will be of some Use and Direction to those who shall be engaged in any learned Debate. I shall first lay down the naked Rules, afterwards explain, and further illustrate them by Examples. And as one of the latest Controversies, that has merited the *Attention* of the

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World,

World, has been between a certain Divine, a Batchelor of Divinity, sometime a Fellow of a learned College in *Cambridge*, and a dissenting Gentleman, whom I am sorry I cannot adorn with any honourable Titles and Distinctions, because, in his great Modesty, he desires to be unknown, I shall draw my Examples from thence, but, more particularly, the Appendix of the former, and the Postscript of the latter, as these two *Pieces* are but lately set forth, and I am but just now risen up from the reading of them. And to tell thee, courteous Reader, the plain Truth, the Canons and Precepts of *polemic* Writing, which I am now about to present thee with, were suggested to my Mind by the reading of those two Performances. But I am chiefly beholden to the latter; which contains abundance of this kind of Knowledge, and is, in proportion to the Bulk of it, almost as rich a Treasury of the *polemic* Art or Craft, as *Homer* is of the *Poetic*.

I.

Consider whom you write for: If for Scholars, and People of the best Sense, use a little Salt, not much: but if for the common Sort of People,

People, you may spare your Salt, and use Gall, which comes easier and cheaper, in the room of it.

There is a great Difference between these two sorts of seasoning, which whoever has any Taste will easily perceive. Salt is a *Smartness* either in the *Sentiment* or the *Expression*, very consistent with good-nature, and good-manners. And a few Grains of it, scattered here and there, seem to be necessary, at least of admirable Use and Advantage, in Controversial Writings, especially upon deep or dry Subjects, to give some relish to a long Train of learned Quotations, or close Reasonings, to increase the Curiosity of the Reader, and excite in him a kind of Thirst and longing for the Remainder. Yet let it be remembered, that *Salt* alone will not satisfy the learned, or the sensible Part of Mankind; and if you address to these, as our Divine professes to do, you must provide something that is substantial, on which to bestow it. I, for my Part, think the Entertainment, which that Clergyman has given us, is substantial enough to satisfy common Appetites. Nor indeed is it *altogether without* Salt. To be sure, there is not *over-much* of it; and if I may be allowed to speak

freely my Thoughts, he seems to be rather faulty on the defective side. Thus much, however, must be said for him, that he has not gone about to supply that defect with an Abundance of *Gall*; but when he shews his greatest Indignation and Displeasure at the Ways of those with whom he has to do, and treats them with most *Salt*, he appears to me in as perfect good humour with their Persons, as *Virgil*, by some of our Criticks, is thought to be, when he besprinkled *Bavius* and *Mævius* with it.

Gall is a *Bitterness* which must be infused into the Stile of every *polemical* Writer, who designs his Works should please the Splenetic, or captivate the Ignorant. Let him not spare either Prince or Prelate, who, in any Degree, has shewn himself unfavourable to his Cause, or Party. Let not his Name be mentioned, tho' in the plainest and simplest Narration, without a bitter *Irony*, or biting *Sarcasm*. This Rule the anonymous Gentleman almost constantly observed.—“ In the Preamble (says he) “ to the Act of Uniformity of *Charles II.* “ you have the Sentiments of the Legislature, “ and that your *most religious King*.”—So again, “ *blessed Laud*”—And again, “ the
“ *holy*

" *holy Martyr.*" Well, what of Him? why,
 " he died unblest with the sight of what he
 " hoped for, and had prophesied of." There's
 a Fleer at his violent and untimely Death!
 " But you, his Son and Successor in Doctrine
 " and Spirit, are taking bold Strides to reach
 " *Pisgab-top,*" &c. There's a Stroke at
 his Adversary! which yet is nothing to what
 we meet with in other Places, where *Indo-*
lence and *Sloth*, *Persecution* and *Ambition*,
 and *sacrificing his Conscience to his worldly*
Views, are either directly charged upon him,
 or insinuated of him. This is writing like a
 Man who knows his Business, and how to
 catch the Taste of the Vulgar. And tho' it
 happens here, as I am informed, that the real
 Character of his Adversary is rather the reverse
 of all this, the matter is not great. For as he
 is but a private Clergyman, of no Name and
 Rank in the Church, there are a world of
 People who will know no other, than that
 this is a true Account of him.

II.

Consider also what End you write for: If it
 be, the Discovery and Manifestation of Truth,
 and the Conviction of those who oppose it,
 use

use fair and clear *reasoning*: but if it be only, keeping your Party in Countenance, your Business will be to decline *reasoning* as much as you well can, and to make use of *Declamation* and *Harangue*, in the room of it.

I think, the Divine has given us some Indications that the Display of Truth, and bringing those who oppose it to the Acknowledgment of it, is his chief Aim. His manner seems to shew it. He is plain, candid, fair, and seems to use a Conscience in all his Dealings. And there runs, thro' his Writings, a Vein of Argumentation, conformable; and well fitted to his Design. And, as to the Gentleman, it must be said in *his* Behalf, that if it *was* the End of *his* Writing, as it seems to be, to make his Party believe that something yet may be said for them, and to hearten them up, he, too, has admirably adjusted *his* Stile and Manner to his Design. In point of Argument, he is reserved and sparing, as he ought to be. But for Declamation (according to the Direction of the preceding Canon) there is no Want of it. And depend upon it, whoever declaims and harangues, and talks away, with the Agility he does, will be, in the Judgment of the Vulgar, an Overmatch for any other Man, or any *seven Men that can render a Reason.* The

The Reader, I hope, will not expect, I should produce here particular Passages in the *declamatory* Stile, in Support of the Judgment I have given. They are too long for *That*. He may open the *Postscript* where he pleases, and it will be a mighty Chance if the first thing that catches his Eye be not——*with Astonishment be it seen—Behold, a Protestant and a Divine—a sometime Fellow of a learned College——I congratulate you much, Sir——Rise up, O ye Kings, to these your Pastors and Governors! be instructed, and pay Homage to their spiritual Decrees!* or something else in the like noble Strain, which is far better Logic, and a much easier way to make things plain to vulgar Apprehensions, than all your Syllogisms, all your Premises and Conclusions, and such dull stupid Stuff, as some of our Books of Controversy abound with.

III.

Single out such Parts of your Adversary's Book as you think you can best deal with, and pass by the rest. And if you find him, in his Reply to any thing you have advanced, to have fairly confuted you, be not so weak as to own it, but,

but, in your Rejoinder, pass over in Silence *that* Part, and say nothing about it.

This Art of Controversy our Batchelor of Divinity is a Stranger to. He, for his Part, passes by nothing, but what is impertinent to the Question in debate. He toils, and cuts his Way through, and seems to make it a Point, to leave no Difficulty, no, not so much as what his Antagonist thinks, or would be supposed to think, a Difficulty, unanswered. I fancy, he would no more do it, than some Generals would leave one of the Enemy's Fortresses behind them. But the Gentleman acts with more Liberty and Discretion, and meddles with nothing, no, not in the Way of Defence, but what he likes. Sometimes you shall see him skimming over whole Sheets of Paper (like *Camilla* over the Tops of whole Fields of standing Grain) without touching them; although the most interesting and capital Points between the Church and Dissenters were there largely handled. See 2d Defence, p. 32. At other times, although the Points (being foreign to the Question) were of his own calling up, and though he incessantly teized his Adversary with them, you shall see him abandon them to Discretion, without speaking a Word

Word for them, as soon as he perceives, by his Adversary's Reply, he is not able to maintain them against him. " All (says he) " is *futiles*," or, ——— " *it neither needs nor " merits a particular Reply ;*" or, ——— " *there is scarce a Shew of any Opposition to " what I had advanced.*" And whenever you find him talking in this Strain, then, be sure, he is most gravelled. Of this admirable Management you have divers Instances in his Letters, some in his Postscript, but one that is extremely remarkable. In his 3d Letter, he had asserted, that by our Constitution, the King or Queen, as supreme Head of the Church, is the Fountain of all Power and Jurisdiction therein——authorized to instruct, over-rule, and controul all the Archbishops, Bishops, and Priests, in this Kingdom, in all their most spiritual and ecclesiastical Concerns——empowered to compose public Prayers for the Church——to stop all preaching therein——to fill vacant Bishopricks with what Persons he or she pleases, or not to fill them at all——to direct all Ecclesiasticks what they shall, or shall not preach——and is the final Judge of Heresy, even in the abstrusest and most metaphysical Points. And he tells us of cer-

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tain Facts, as Exemplifications and Exertions of this extraordinary Power in our Princes. These Charges, our Divine, in his Appendix, sets himself to refute, one by one, shewing largely, in ten whole Pages, they were either false, or, in the Sense they were true, nothing to the purpose. Now, what says the Gentleman to all this? Why, in the Way of supporting his Assertions, extraordinary as they are, not a Syllable. And there he is right. It is best to say nothing, when one has nothing to say that is to the purpose.

IV.

Sometimes, when you care not to enter into any Disproof of your Adversary's Arguments, you may let it alone, and only discourse upon the same Subjects, (taking the other Side of the Question) in your own Way.

Yet let it be remembered, that, in this Case, you are to contrive, that his Name may appear here and there, and some few Sentences or Positions, by him advanced, be cavilled, or flirited at; for otherwise, you will have no Pretence to call your Book an Answer

swer to him. I perfectly well remember, that, when I first read the three Letters of this anonymous Gentleman, I could not but admire his Art and wonderful good Management this Way, upon almost every Subject he was led into, leaving untouched the greatest Part of his Adversary's Letters and Defences, and " *remarking*, as he himself somewhere " expresses it, upon but a *few* of the *many* " obnoxious Passages with which his Letters " abound, that greater Liberty might be left " (pray mind it) for presenting his Adversary with several strong, and to him unanswerable Arguments for Dissent from our " Church." He would just nibble or smell at an Argument (as I have sometimes seen, in clear Water, the little Fishes do, at a Bait) and not liking it, would instantly turn away from it (very likely) to his Common-Place-Book, for Proofs and Arguments of his own collecting or devising, having no other Connection with what his Adversary was arguing, than that the general Subject was the same. And having expatiated upon these for some Pages, would pass on triumphantly to another Argument. I have been often wonderfully recreated and delighted, to see how cleverly he would sob off his Adversary

sary with what one may call a Counter-Discourse to his, instead of an Answer to it.

“ This is a new and witty Way of answering Books,” as *the Divine* had before observed. It is Pity he did not shew us, wherein the Wittiness, and the great Advantages of it lay. But as *he* did not, I will do it now. By this Contrivance, one may answer a Book, although of some Bulk, almost as soon as it appears, provided the Presses be not otherwise engaged, and it be not a bitter Frost, to hinder the working of them. Let him keep by him a short Tract, a twelve-penny, or suppose only a fix-penny Touch, upon some Subject that he thinks like to be controverted. And when any thing, upon that Subject, on the other Side of the Question, shall appear, let him instantly procure it, and, skimming it over, which may be done in a few Hours, pick out here and there a few Sentences that are contradictory to some Positions advanced and maintained by him, and croud them into his Manuscript, at proper Places, with a short Censure of them. Then set the Press immediately to work, and, in a Week or two, out comes an Answer, which will strike the World with

Surprize,

Surprize, and raise Admiration at the Velocity of his Pen, and the Quickness of his Parts. Besides, by coming out so early, and following his Adversary just at the Heels, God knows how much Mischief, which he might otherwise have done, may be prevented. I cannot in Conscience compliment the unknown Gentleman so far, as to suppose, that his Tracts, or the Bulk of any of them, were drawn up beforehand. But I leave it to the judicious to determine, whether some Parts of some of them were not; considering the little Relation they have to the Subject in Debate, and in what manner they are tag'd to it; particularly, all he has said in his first Letter, from the 22d to the 36th Page inclusive, which is more than a third of the whole Book, concerning the Constitution of the Church of *England*; and all he has said in his *Postscript*, as from Archbishop *Wake*, in Diminution of the Rights and Privileges of the Convocation. Who can think that the former was originally drawn up against his present Adversary, to shew, that there is no Schism in the present Separation; or the latter, to shew, that the Church has no Power from Christ to decree Rites and Ceremonies? You shall never make me believe,

lieve, that such an Artift in Controverfy would fit down to prove that the Church of Chrift has no fuch Power, by telling us (fupposing it all true) that the *Engliſh* Convocation muſt be aſſembled by the King's Writ, that they cannot diſſolve themſelves, can make no Canons without Licence, nor publiſh or execute them, without his Confirmation of them, and a deal more of the like Nature concerning it. No, certainly, all this was prudently provided, and laid in, before his Antagoniſt's Letters were brought forth, or perhaps conceived, to be made uſe of on any Occaſion, when it could, ſome how or other, be introduced.

V.

In your Replies, offer the ſame things you had done before, and urge them afreſh without taking notice of what had been ſaid to diſprove them.

A Controverſialift of a right Spirit will not ſtick at this. Why ſhould he? What ſhould he fear? Can it be thought that your common Readers, or ſuch as read only for Amuſement, or for the further Confirmation
of

of their present Prejudices, will ever remember, or trouble their Heads, to see what you had said in a former Book, or to examine what your Adversary had replied to it? The Gentleman, you see, is under no Apprehensions of this Sort. This he has plainly shewn in his third Letter. And though, in his Postscript, of which the principal Matter had scarcely been touched upon before, one could not expect many Instances of this daring, there is one at least, that is very observable. For he still persists in his former Pretence, that his Adversary could be no way prevailed upon to speak out his Sentiments concerning *Church Power, and where lodged*, though he had told him more than once, it was not (*originally*, as he distinguishes) in the Civil Magistrate, but in the Pastors and Governors of the Church. Yet, what Credit, pray, has he lost by it? Who of his Party will blame him for it? Are they not liker to commend, and be delighted with it? And even his insulting his Adversary upon this Head, (for that he ventures to do) do you think it is not pleasing to them?

VI.

If you cannot defend the true Point in question, change it, and slip in another, which you can better defend in the Room of it.

This also may be done, without being perceived by common Readers. The Gentleman has done it with great Dexterity, in the Point of our consecrating Churches. In every one of his Letters, he compares the Papists Consecration of holy Water, &c. to our Consecration of Churches, and Church-Yards, challenging any one to shew, that the one was not as foolish and ridiculous a Superstition, as the other. The Challenge (it seems) was accepted: The Difference was shewn; and it was made plainly to appear, that in the Church of *Rome*, the Consecration of holy Water, Candles, and such like things, is meant to impart to them certain natural and supernatural Powers, such as driving away Devils, curing Diseases, and the Pardon of venial Sins, in which the Superstition of those Consecrations properly consists; whereas, in the Church of *England*, no such thing is intended, or thought of, in the consecrating Churches; but

but all that is meant by it, is only the solemn Appropriation of them to the Uses of Religion. Here now, the Point, which lay upon the Gentleman to make out, was, that in this respect there is no Difference between the two Churches, that the Church of *Rome* does not pretend, by their Consecrations, to impart, to the things consecrated, any such Virtues, or else, if it does, that the Church of *England* does the same. But finding it impossible to make out either of these Points, or to offer any thing upon them that would look plausible, he very prudently sets himself to shew the Reader *something else*, viz. that our Consecrations are done with a good deal of Ceremony, and “ *if they at all resemble those which were performed by Archbishop Laud* ” (which, yet, he cannot but know, they do not) *are equally ridiculous and superstitious.*” And then to dazzle the Eyes of the Reader, and make him lose Sight of the true Question, he sets full before him the whole Pomp and Pageantry of that Archbishop’s Consecrations. The Gentleman, you see, has quite changed the Question, and has done it so handsomely, that I will be your Bond-slave, if, out of some twenty of his ordinary Readers, there be found one, who has the least

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Perceivance

Perceivance or Suspicion of the *Legerdemain* that is here practised upon him. In most Cases, it will require a more close Way of thinking and reasoning than commonly falls to their Share, to detect an Artifice of this Nature. And if a Writer has not before his Eyes some Fear and Awe of his more, learned or sensible Readers, and stands upon his Credit only with the Multitude, he may very safely venture upon it.

VII.

Contrive, as often as you can, to give your Adversary's Words a turn, and to put such a Sense upon them as he never thought of.

As, suppose your Adversary, in throwing off from him a Charge of aspiring to the highest Dignities and Preferments of the Church, should think fit to declare, that " what you
 " call *Snugness*, or such Emoluments as will
 " purchase him a Freedom from all low and
 " perplexing Cares, will content him ;" make yourself merry with the Word *Snugness*, and tell him, you suppose he means, " wanton-
 " ing in vast Affluence, Indolence and Sloth." If he should chance to say, I, and another learned Gentleman have fully demonstrated
 against

against our Adversary, this, or that ; don't let it pass for an unguarded or inadvertent Expression, or be supposed to mean, as it may, *I, and another, who is a Gentleman of great Learning*, have demonstrated &c ; but hold it up to the Reader, as shewing, he has a little Vanity, and " ranks himself with the " learned, and even claims Precedence among " them." Or, suppose he talks of carrying on the Controversy, and *doing things in a soldierly Way*, and *not employing poisoned Weapons, and committing Outrage and Brutality* ; set him forth as talking of his own *Intrepidity*, and bragging of his daring to undertake the Attack or Defence of almost any thing. Perhaps, you will say, that doing things in a *soldierly Way*, when it is set in opposition to *employing poisoned Weapons, and committing Outrage*, every Body will see, does not intimate his *Intrepidity*, but his *Fairness* and *Moderation* in the Management of Controversy. That is true : But what Occasion have you to speak of *poisoned Weapons, or committing Outrage* ? Produce nothing of your Adversary's, that will clear up his Meaning, may discover the Art you treat him with, and prejudice your Cause ; and then you are safe. For who, do you think, will read *you*, and

him together? Take my word for it, *That* is not the Way of reading Controversy now a days. No Body does it. When your Adversary has been read, and laid by, a good while, *you* come out, and are read; but then, all he has said upon the Point is forgotten. Depend upon it, no Body now (as I said before) will ever read and compare you together, to see how fairly or solidly you have answered him, except your Adversary himself, who has a Concern to do it. And if *he* does it, and finds you out, what does it matter? If he publicly complains, and shews *how* you have perverted his Meaning, do it again, according to the Direction of the 5th Canon. That will look as if you were not satisfied with his Explication, and Vindication of himself. And if he repeats his Complaint of your still persisting to pervert him, you may then let the Matter drop, and be silent upon it, as the third Canon directs you to do.

VIII.

Instead of seriously replying to his Remarks or Arguments, you may sometimes set up a Laugh at them.

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You may make them be *thought ridiculous*, many Times when you are not able to make them *appear weak or false*; and this is to be done by laughing at them. I think Mr. *Addison* has somewhere observed, “ that the “ Rabble of Mankind are apt to think every thing that is laughed at, with any “ Mixture of Wit, is ridiculous in itself.” The Free-thinkers (whose extravagant Levity and Ridicule of Revelation, seen in all their Writings, gave him Occasion, if I mistake not, for this Remark) find it to be true. It is certain, they have made more Infidels by laughing, than by reasoning. And who can blame a Christian Gentleman for essaying to use the same Weapons in Behalf of the *Purity* and *Liberty* of the Gospel, which have been so successful in the Hands of the Gentlemen of the Free-thinking Way, against the Truth and Certainty of it? Perhaps, the Gentleman’s Talents this way, are not very extraordinary. For indeed, it is not given to every one to converse or write with true *Attic* Salt, or *Roman* Urbanity. Be it so. Yet whoever pleases may be *jocular*; and any Sort of Wit will serve for the Amusement and Deception of those who have none.

Our

Our Divine, as it seems to me, does not lay Stress enough upon this Canon, which I wonder at, considering the vast Usefulness and Importance of it. Whether it be from some Consciousness that his Faculty at laughing off an Argument is not so good as his Ability to confute it, or that he thinks he is fettered by his Character, and that it would not become *him*, on *any* Occasion, to laugh out, and much less to set up a high Laugh, I will not take upon me to determine. Yet with all his Gravity, I see he can now and then condescend to smile a little, and to rally (in his way) his Adversary, instead of confuting him. With what Satisfaction does he seem to report a homely Saying of a plain Countryman, his Neighbour,——that *Setting up their new Meeting-house, with design to BLOW up the old one, was as wicked a Thing as the Gunpowder Treason!* And how does he please himself with the Question which he thereupon puts to him,——*Why it should not be thought as wicked a thing to set up the first Meeting-house, to BLOW up the Parish Church there, as to set up the second to blow That up!* And with what a Sneer does he tell us

us how his *honest Friend* was bobbled, as he fancies his Betters would have been with that Question. See his 1st Defence p. 27. And p. 42. of the same, we have another Instance. He had been suggesting against the dissenting Ministers, that tho' they are always inveighing against the Use of the *Athanasian Creed*, and more particularly, the condemnatory Sentences therein, they do, nevertheless, subscribe the 8th Article of the Church of *England*, which contains the highest Approbation and Justification of it. To this the Gentleman very properly replies from Dr. *Calamy*, in his Life of Mr. *Baxter*,—" that the dissenting
 " Ministers about the City, in a Body, gave
 " in their Sense of the Article, when they sub-
 " scribed it, expressly excluding the damnato-
 " ry Clauses from their Subscription. And
 " the present dissenting Ministers (says the
 " Gentleman) under the Favour of this De-
 " claration and Protest of their Fathers and
 " Predecessors, may be supposed now to
 " subscribe with the same Disapprobation
 " of the damnatory Clause." This De-
 fence of the present Ministers subscribing the
 Creed, without making for themselves any
 Protest or Declaration of their Sense of it;
 is so strong and solid, that this Divine, and
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Batchelor of Divinity, did not know how to
 attack it in the rational and argumentative
 Way. What does he therefore but set him-
 self to turn it into Ridicule? " How is it
 " (says he, or something to this Effect) that
 " the Protest and Declarations of their Pre-
 " decessors in the Ministry should be esteem-
 " ed theirs? What greater Connection can
 " there be between *them* and their Fathers in
 " the Ministry, than there is between *them* and
 " their Fathers, their Grandfathers, or Great-
 " Grandfathers according to the Flesh? or if
 " the Benefit of their Predecessors Declarations
 " and Protests may be communicated to such
 " as come after them, tell me, I pray, how
 " far and wide they are communicable? Are
 " they communicable only to those who suc-
 " ceed them in the same Churches, or to
 " those also who come after them in other
 " Churches? What the dissenting Ministers
 " about the City then did in a Body, is it
 " imputable only to the Body of the present
 " dissenting Ministers about the City, or to
 " those in the Country too? or does it extend
 " only to their next and immediate Successors,
 " whether in City or Country, or to how
 " many Successions? or will it descend to the
 " End of time, in case the Dissention shall so
 " long

“ long continue ? or if their Forefathers Declarations and Protests are to be taken for theirs, why should not, too, their Forefathers Subscriptions be also taken for their Subscriptions ? ” He goes on in this bantering Way, and represents his Adversary’s arguing in so ridiculous a Light, as may well impose upon all his Readers, who are not well guarded against such Sophistry by the want of common Sense.

Take another Instance, if you please. For I would not be too sparing of what he does furnish toward the Illustration of this Canon, because, in Truth, it is but little he has contributed to the Illustration of the preceding ones. The Gentleman presses him with the Inconvenience and Absurdity of our Clergy’s deriving their Orders, their spiritual or ecclesiastical Descent, from that foul Harlot, the Church of *Rome*. And how does he get off ? By ransacking the Stores of Schoolmen and Divines, to shew, that corrupt Practices, and heretical Opinions maintained by any Church will not invalidate the Consecrations made in it ? No such thing. He only runs Divisions upon, and plays with the Simile of the Harlot. “ Har-

“ lot (says he) as she is, she may, neverthe-

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“ less,

“ less, bring forth Children, as well as a vir-
 “ tuous and honest Matron, and sometimes
 “ Children far better than their Parents. And
 “ (continues he) if I must derive my spiritu-
 “ al Pedigree from a Harlot, I had rather it
 “ should be an old withered one of an an-
 “ cient and honourable Line, than a young
 “ Strumpet, of no Name and Family, and
 “ who came into the World but yesterday.”

I am pleased to see this severe and serious Di-
 vine finds, now and then, the Conveniency of
 this excellent Canon, and vouchsafes to avail
 himself of it.

But forasmuch as this Canon, though an ex-
 cellent one, may be sometimes attended with
 Inconvenience, I must add

IX.

In certain Cases, instead of laughing your-
 self, bid your Reader do it. *N. B.* You need
 not let him know what he is to laugh at.

The Cases I mean are, when the Matter in
 debate is something that is not much for the
 Credit of your Party, or what you would
 not chuse, upon some other Account, should
 be discussed. In these Cases, it will be diffi-
 cult

cult to contrive how to laugh at it yourself, without discovering to the Reader what it is you laugh at. And would you re-publish to the World what your Adversary has said to the Dishonour of your Friends? No, if they will have it, let them seek for it in *his* Book, which you may assure yourself, few or none will do, though the Book were to lie at their Elbows. Besides, you cannot fairly take Notice of, and set up a Laugh at any Point he maintains, without taking some Notice of what he has said in Support of it. And should you do *that*, you may happen to spoil all. For who can tell, but, being brought into Sight, instead of provoking the Laughter of your Reader, it may produce Conviction in him. Therefore, in all these Cases, recommend the Laugh to your Reader, rather than take it yourself. For though he does not know, nor in all Likelihood will trouble himself to see, what it is, he will conclude there must be something there that is extremely weak, nonsensical, and ridiculous.

Thus for Example : “ The extraordinary
 “ Remark (says the Gentleman to his Anta-
 “ gonist) which introduces your Appendix—
 “ that Views of worldly Interest encourage

“ and support our Dissent from the Establish-
 “ ment—I shall leave to the universal Laugh
 “ of your Readers, for a Confutation, and
 “ pass on to Points of greater *Moment in de-*
 “ *bate.*” It will be worth your while to
 take a short View of his admirable Manage-
 ment, in this Place. He does venture to give
 you the Sight of the naked Remark his Ad-
 versary had made, supposing, it is likely, it
 would be thought a groundless one, by most
 of his Readers, who, never troubling their
 Heads with Observations and Reflections upon
 things of this Nature, might not readily, and
 without some Assistance, apprehend, how it
 could be for the Interest of any one to forsake
 an established Church, and to associate himself
 with a tolerated Sect. But then observe, how
 carefully he conceals all his Adversary had
 said, (and it is not a little) to shew the Truth
 and Justness of his Remark. “ All *That* he
 “ leaves to the universal Laugh of his Rea-
 “ ders, for a Confutation !” Wisely done !
 And how *cavalierly*, too, he turns his Back !
 With what an Air he throws off from him the
 Examination of a Point he had no Mind
 should be looked into !

X.

Give yourself superior Airs ; speak every where of your Adversary in slight terms, and, at proper Places, throw in Expressions of great Scorn and Contempt of him.

The Gentleman has executed this Canon with great Felicity, and is indeed admirable, this way. Lo! how he talks of himself, and his Adversary !—" I will candidly endeavour
 " your *Illumination* on this Point, as I have
 " the Satisfaction to hope I have, not with-
 " out good Effect, attempted on some other."
 —" Having laboured your Edification in a
 " Point of high Importance, where it is cer-
 " tain, you greatly needed it."—" The Con-
 " stitution of your Church you seem (excuse
 " my Freedom) extremely unacquainted with,
 " and not at all to understand."—" Can it
 " enter into an Imagination so vague even
 " as yours?"—A Gentleman of your Condi-
 " tion has, no doubt, heard at least, (there
 " is a Stroke for you) of the Writings of
 " those venerable Names, *Burnet, Kennet,*
 " *Nicholson, Hody and Wake.*"—" A due
 " Attention to their learned Researches will
 " effectually

“ effectually ease your Mind of the Errors it
 “ labours under.”——How grand, now, this
 Gentleman appears! And how contemptible
 a Figure does his Adversary make in your
 Imagination! And yet I suspect he does not
 despise him in his Heart, but, it may be, in-
 wardly feels even his Superiority, and groans
 under the Weight of it, and all this Grimace
 and Affectation of despising, and crowing over
 him, is only for his vulgar and ordinary
 Readers, who, he is not ignorant, have this,
 amongst the rest of their Foibles, that they
 are prone to acknowledge any Character that
 is but *confidently* assumed, and to believe eve-
 ry one as considerable, as he gives himself out
 to be. One Proof and Instance of which
 Weakness is, the great Opinion they are apt to
 conceive of Quacks and Mountebanks, above
 your sober and modest Practitioners.

XI.

If you write for the few learned, or the
 more sensible Part of the World, it is no
 great Matter who has the last Word. But if
 you would gain the midling and lower Sort of
 Men, before you have it.

Gentlemen

Gentlemen of Sense and Learning, by weighing your Arguments one against another, will presently perceive which of you has Truth and Reason on his Side ; and when your Business is done (and they can easily see when it is done) they think it reasonable to give over. But the common Run of People, knowing, perhaps, as little of the Matter in Controversy *as they do of the Motion of the Stars*, and being about as capable of judging of the Solidity and Force of your Arguments, as they are of the Truth of *astronomical Calculations*, have other Measures to decide by. He that talks biggest, and holds out longest, is always, with them, the Conqueror. See (say they of the one Side, when the Controversy ceases) *his Mouth is stopped, he has not a Word more to say for himself*. And those of the other will be, perhaps, a little staggered, ready to shake their Heads, and say one to another, *What a Pity is it that so honest a Man, in so good a Cause, should meet with so deadly an Adversary, and be run down by him?* A Writer of Spirit, who has a *due* Regard to the *Voice of the People*, will be quite ravished to hear himself and his Adversary thus spoken of. Even our Church Divine, who seems too much

much to slight the Sense and Judgment of *the People*, if I rightly guess, is not quite so insensible, as he would seem to be, of this Charm. For though he declares, *he does not write for the Mob, but for Gentlemen, and others who have Sense, and can feel the Force of a plain Argument, and therefore does not care who has the last Word*, he would not, I fancy, have been displeased, if he himself could have had it. Else, what means his stealing upon us with his *Appendix*, after the Controversy seemed to be quite over? I will warrant you, he thought his Adversary would now have desisted, and left all the Points he had so long been provoking him to speak to, undefended. It was mighty weak, if he did; and after so long and familiar Acquaintance with him, and so many Proofs given of his unwearied Perseverance and Resolution, he might, one would think, have known him better. Depend upon it, that as he has proceeded all along in this Controversy agreeably to the preceding, he will conclude it according to the Precept now delivered. He has let his Adversary understand, that, *if he shall be again called forth*, he is ready; and given him a great Threatning, that if he will not be quiet, and let this *Postscript be the last Word*, he will come out again,

again, open a new Field of Controversy, and drive him God knows whither. And I have little doubt, but his Antagonist, either through Fear——or Prudence——will now withdraw himself, let him have the Point he seems resolved to have, whatever it costs him, and leave him *Master of the Field*.

To be short, *ad populum Phalaræ*. If thou aimest at captivating and leading *the People*, rather than satisfying the Wise and Learned, thy Business will be to harangue and declaim, bounce and banter, flirt and flout, treat thy Adversary with Rudeness and Words of Contempt, in the course of the Controversy, till thou hast made him sick of it, and leave it off. Then shalt thou have Praise in the Sight of all the Rabble of the Land, and triumph without an Adversary.

F I N I S.

again, on a new Field of Conquest, and
give him God's known wisdom. And I
have this doubt, but his Angel, sent
through the power of his presence,
will draw himself, let him have the
seems resolved to have, whatever it
and leave him Master of the Field.

To be short, an honest Plain
a most satisfactory and leading
rather than satisfying the Will and
Barnes will be so language
peace and order, first and last
Advantage with kindness and
keep in the eye of the
then had made of it, and
Then that shall be the
all the fields of the land, and
out an Advantage.



F I W I S

